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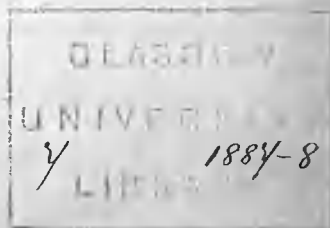
I hereby declare that the following
Essay is entirely my own Composition
Oliver Burn Murchard

Some Mental Approaches of Disease.

"The practice of Medicine is not only one of Physics
but of Psychology as well."

S. With M.D.

Approved
W. H. Anderson



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Preface.

When an individual becomes insane, it is frequently remarked by his friends that those preambles of ideation, which constitute his disease are in the main, an exaggeration of mental traits, with which they were previously familiar, but which had not hitherto attracted themselves on the attention, or disturbed the harmonious blending of elements in his character.

To note these faint forebodings of coming mischief, to follow the trace of their presence in connection with a man's entire bodily and mental history, to observe how, in some cases, deterioration runs in complete ruin of the faculties while in others the process becomes arrested and stereotyped in character, that seem to mark the various stages of intellectual decay, to investigate a wide range of antecedent biological conditions, and, as the result of the whole, to endeavour to forecast the future, and determine ~~on~~ towards a particular issue, these, and the like problems, which form a part of the regular functions of the practicing physician, open up a wide field of enquiry which may well employ the undivided

attention of experts for many years to come.

The facts and views set forth in the following pages are to be met with at the very outset of an investigation, whose methods have hitherto been rather vaguely defined, and whose language is still imperfect.

+ Note. Mr. Fletcher Beach, Superintendent of the Darenth Asylum, in a lecture on the Influence of hereditary predisposition in the production of insanity, (British Medical Journal, May 28th 1887) writes in the preamble of his discourse:—
"In former times it was held that insanity may proceed from purely psychological causes This idea of mental disease has long since been exploded, and it is recognized on all sides that disease of the mind is due to disease of the brain."

Such materialistic declarations of this type, from authoritative persons, are perhaps rare. But Mr. Beach's statement represents, with sufficient precision, the kind of views that are criticized in the text.

Introduction

There is reason to believe that modern medicine, by its comparative neglect of psychological agencies in the treatment of disease, has overlooked a therapeutic method of far reaching practical application, and has thus indirectly become responsible for a considerable amount of entirely + remediable suffering.

The enormous service which the enlightenment of the last century conferred upon the sciences was to show that they are one and all expressions of laws inherent in the matter and forces of the universe.

The benefit which this new faith was fitted to confer, were to some extent impaired by the materialism, with which, unfortunately but inevitably, it was in the first instance associated. Medicine, which forms on the study of the matter of the human body, inclines to estimate remedies by their visible effects on the functions, and to minimize results whose materialistic basis in the nervous system it is unable, by the method of observation, to demonstrate.

It has been slow to admit the actuality and importance

of a whole cycle of processes, most efficacious in regard both to the causation and cure of disease, whose operations are placed beyond the methods of empirical research, and whose physical machinery it has hitherto been unable to display.

No doubt the materialistic tendency of medical doctrine has been emphasized by the prevailing philosophy, which in propounding physical explanations of mental phenomena, has not always escaped the imputation of belittling the spiritual element in knowledge.

The Association School of ~~Philosophy~~ Psychologists; in accounting for human experience by an accidental rather than rational connection of ideas, in attenuating the meaning of spiritual conception and overlooking the essential activity of the mind in the acquisition of knowledge, has contributed not a little to confuse the diagnosis of mental diseases, and to retard the appreciation of intelligent views as to their treatment.

For the ancient superstition reference to occult and supernatural agencies, there has been substituted a new

and more refined, but in its results, in some respects
a not less pernicious fanaticism, which judges all
opinions not so much by their inherent reasonableness
and practical utility as by their accordance with a
preconceived and rather rigid interpretation of human
experience. Thus Oliver Wendell Holmes, replying to his
own question "What is a poet's fame?" says, that it
consists in "Sad hints about his reason," and, in the
humble ranges of spiritual achievement, we constantly
have occasion to observe how opinions, which spring from a
faith in the progressive force of humanity, and which, in
other ages, would have caused their authors to be
burned as ~~a~~ heretics or ~~a~~ witches, are regarded as signs of
commencing insanity, or sought to be suppressed as the
product of unwholesome hysterical emotion. And so,
through failing to give due attention to the ideal side of
human nature, we fall into opposite errors, regarding as
irrationa! opinions, which may be useful and important,
and as a consequence necessarily failing to make a
true discrimination when what is wicked is actually presented.

In practical matters the results of this defective doctrine are striking and momentous. The instrument, by which, in the end, all mental effects are produced, is education, which depends on the formation of right habits; which again involves a high level of nervous organization. A primary teaching of medicine is therefore to educate with a view to health, to organize useful habits in the brain, and thus make provision for future welfare and happiness.

What is our actual condition in the matter? On the one hand, we see a school of philosophy zealously complaining that it is little better than moral suicide to make happiness an end of human action, while on the other we see men, in their practical efforts after wellbeing, engaging in that intense competition for material advantage, which is now generally admitted to be a main element in the production of suicide and all mental disorders, and which, it is gradually being realized, is a no less potent agent in the causation of physical disease and death.

Meanwhile a physician who is careful and intelligent

Can see very well that, in order to cure disease in many of its forms, it is essential that we endeavour to form some conception of the mental condition of the patient, his temperament, his education, his religion, his political opinions etc., which are all important considerations in regard both to the diagnosis and rational treatment.

The necessity of uniting on a new and comprehensive exhibition of the mental factor in disease is indeed daily enforced in the event of ordinary practice. Through the variety of bodily and spiritual suffering, which we experience, the mind is present, as a self-conscious unit, gathering the separate impressions into one, and organizing them as capacities of pain in the part of the brain, which ministers to the imagination, ready, on occasion being given, at a future time, to reproduce them as disease, taking the form it may be of melancholia, or perhaps of some perversion of the organic functions. These sensorial images are transmitted by inheritance, and may be indefinitely increased or mitigated from generation to generation, by the kind of physical and

mental influence, to which the successive levels are subjected.

Thus, while medicine teaches that health depends upon the harmonious and peaceful exercise of the mental faculties, which psychologists assert to be the primary condition of human happiness; while, further, it is evident that the special activities of each individual are largely determined by his education, which should give wholesomeness to individualistic action by bringing them into a kind of organic connection ^{with} universal experience, there need be no apprehension that action in the domain of mental therapeutics will be lacking either in sanction or in adequate direction and reward.

Analysis of Case.

The following description illustrates the border region between normal and pathological emotional susceptibility, and, as it represents in epitome features common to a large number of cases, may serve as a starting point for some remarks in regard to the mental aspect of disease in general. The account is condensed from notes of the patients own statements, and of observations, made by the writer during a period of several years.

The family history of N. S. indicated hereditary insanity on the mother's side, but otherwise was not remarkable. He is himself 28 years of age, and 4 years ago had an attack of melancholia occasioned by a love affair, the depression of spirit, which was associated with delusion, lasting about two months. He is now to all appearance a well cultured and intelligent person, and during several years, has devoted himself to literary pursuits. From earliest recollection his disposition has shown an extreme sensibility, particularly for the depressing emotions, fear, grief, sorrow, shame,

bodily discomfort etc. This sensibility greatly predominates over, and to some extent obscures his intellectual faculties, and, for this reason as well as owing to a nervousness, amounting frequently to extreme perturbation of manner, when speaking, he never was in any way distinguished at school or college. His intellectual powers are of the uncommon range and acuteness, but he seems to fail in powers of continuous application. He is also much impeded by attacks of neuralgia, to which he is very subject, and whose worst evil is that, for days together they completely paralyse his mental powers. The nervousness of manner, that has been mentioned, he attributes to an intense consciousness of the mind and personality of other people, which in conversation takes possession of him to such a degree, as frequently to impend utterance and even intelligence for the time, and to cause alarming palpitation. He is affected in various ways by hyperaesthesia, in respect of light, heat, certain kinds of sound, of general sensibility of the body, and localised pain of all sorts. His prevailing temper

is cheerful, but he has frequent mild melancholic attacks, and altho' when questioned, he usually assigns a mental cause for these, yet - I have seldom failed, on such occasions, to refer the cerebral disturbance to a peripheral irritation, sometimes located in the digestive organ, sometimes rheumatism of the muscles, sometimes the wide-spread discomfort - due to catching cold. On the other hand an illness which arose from anxiety about money affairs illustrates from the opposite side the mutual dependence of body and mind. This was that form of dyspepsia described by Dr. Budd, characterized by severe epigastric pain, beginning about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours after meals, and continuing till the next ingestion of food, by which it was relieved, until the process of digestion had reached a certain point, when it again began to be felt; gradually increasing in severity till food was again taken into the stomach. The utmost care in regard to dieting did not influence the complaint - in the slightest degree. Certain drugs, in particular small doses of sub-nitrate of bismuth

* To this account it should be added that physical examination indicated a sound state of all the organs, with the exception of a suspicion of some feebleness and slowness of the action of the heart, the value and import of which it was impossible in this patient to determine with any certainty.

had some effect - in moderating the pain, which did not however disappear, until the cause of anxiety had been removed. It is a fine example and regards himself as a typical example of the influence of mental atmosphere and belief on the general health.

Instances readily suggest themselves, in which dispositions, similar to the above, are wrecked through want of proper guidance and culture in youth. Such an one was Rousseau, in whose case we note the life excessive sensibility constituting an inherent and incorrigible weakness of character, while at the same time suggesting the secret of the extraordinary power, which his genius exercised over others. There is here also the inevitable suffering, occasioned by the contact of such a nature with the rough facts of life, and the same account of tormenting bodily pain, in Rousseau is doubtless more severe and incessant - and probably influencing the state of his mind to a much greater extent - than appears in the "Confessions". In Rousseau the gradual deprecation

of the affection, uncontrolled by healthful external circumstances, found its natural consummation in a degree of settled insanity and in perversion and final complete ruin of intelligence.

Here it is possible merely to indicate the large and grave possibilities of insane manifestation, which such temperaments ^{would} present, according as the condition in which they were placed varied, and to note the symptomatic affinities, which they exhibit, to the so-called cerebral irritation, resulting from injuries to the head, from meningeal inflammation, or the circulation of impure blood through the nerve centres, and the analogies which have been suggested between insanity and the clinical phenomena of the different varieties of coma. It has indeed been maintained by St. Marcie (Essay on Brain Jan. 1887) that in origin, in cause, and in termination, coma and insanity are pathologically and symptomatically identical, that the symptoms of both are produced by

disease of that portion of the brain, in which the
various parts ^{of the body} are all represented in some degree,
the region of consciousness & of the organism as a
whole? Clearly an analogy of this sort admits
of ready misapplication, but - if there be any truth
in it at all, and if an affection of the nervous
elements, that minister to the mental faculties,
can produce such a profound and universal
modification of the functions, as is presented
in coma, we are justified in assuming that
in the lesser lesions, or disturbances of those highest-
centres, of which the minor symptoms of mental
disorder are the indices, there necessarily occurs a
slight and more chronic impairment - of the
organic processes, similar to what we observe
in a striking and acute form in the phenomena
of insanity and coma.

It will have been noted in regard to the youth,
whose case has been detailed, that - circumstances were on
the whole very favorable to his getting the better of the excessive

sensibility which he had inherited. As regards external
his position was comfortable and what is perhaps
equally important, he had, thus, his literary occupations,
free access to the sources of literary and historic culture,
those authentic records of the past-activities of the
mind, of its pains, and of the spiritual anodynes
by which they have been cured.

In other cases it seems as if, in the absence of
suitable educative influences, the character, it may be,
by reason of its original strength and expansiveness,
rapidly outgrew the mental aliment, supplied by the
soil, in which it was reared, and withered away unless
transplanted to another. We may frequently observe
persons of superior talents suffer extremely through
being subjected in youth to an unwise and cramping
system of parental, or social control; and many an
one, in a state of intellectual torpor, not far removed
from pure imbecility, is now vegetating in the quiet
byways of life, who, but for misfortune of this priceless
opportunities, might have been an effective worker in its

honest- thoroughfare.

In contrast with these, we have familiar examples of the profound and all pervasive influence of inherited organization in children of the same parents, growing up together and similarly educated, who yet frequently exhibit a whole gradation from a stolid bordering on fatuity, up to high levels of mental attainment. Among such we shall frequently observe one possessed of rare artistic or intellectual gifts, while to one less fortunate as if by way of contrast there has probably been assigned an organization, manifesting a certain sensitiveness, but almost wholly destitute of the capacity for mental effort, whose disposition as a consequence is from the first-impressed with jealousy and irritability from the constant perception of ideal, aims realized by another, which it would be vain for him to attempt to emulate. One may perhaps see in the institution of the family a kind of provision, made by nature, for the nervous stability of her less favored children,

for, if we have regard to inheritance, and if there is a tendency to an equal distribution of the characteristics of human nature by transmission to descendants, we should expect to find that - the stronger minds in a family will, as a general rule, owe their superiority to the prevalence of those elements, which are deficient in the others, and that - the latter will thus be generally placed at a disadvantage in making those acquisitions, which are necessary for health and sanity. The cases here referred to do not - usually find their way into asylums, but - are to be found drifting aimlessly about - in society, which is on the whole amazingly tolerant of their eccentricities, trying first one occupation, then another, or, overburdened and ill at ease under the restrictions of civilized life, creating for themselves a kind of Utopia, in which, it may be, the common-places of morals are not enforced, and they are protected from the harassing reactions of social duty - by the wholesale practice of lying, of theft; or of shameless mendicancy.

More difficult - is it - to discriminate the parts, played respectively by defective training and original cerebral imperfection, in those morbid and eccentric emotional manifestations which, from time to time, pervade large masses of men. The subject is treated with great fulness of illustration by Dr. Gaisner (*Insanity - Modern Views as to its nature and treatment - 1885*) who arrives at the conclusion that - the semi-insane proceedings, which are frequent incidents in connection with waves of popular emotion, arise from a diseased condition of the faculty of words, fixing public attention upon phenomena, supposed to be mysterious and supernatural, which are really due to unwholesome phases of sentiment -". This demonstration of the dangers to entire sanity, which are involved in the wild anticipation of marvellous superhuman effects, is one of the beneficent triumphs, which rationalism has won for medicine in the domain of mental pathology - psychology. On the other hand, it would probably be incorrect - to regard supernatural expectancy as constituting

evidence of insane tendencies, or to hope to get rid of these disorders by a campaign against supernatural belief. A faculty, concerning itself with unreal fignments of the imagination, might obviously be more usefully employed, but it does not therefore follow that its owner is not mentally sound. Nay, the question is an open one, and was indeed the subject of recent discussion between two distinguished leaders of schools, whether the supernatural, understanding by this the unknown cause of natural phenomena, is not the object on which the 'faculty of wonder' is most largely and legitimately exercised by the sanest intellect. (Article by H. Spencer Retrogressive Religion. Nineteenth Century July 1884).

In the end therefore, there is a considerable amount of inevitable vagueness, attending any attempt to define the phrase of emotion which, when pervading large numbers of people in an intense form, occasions a pronounced degree of mental instability. We may say that it is a temper, in which there is a good deal of the

hysterical element, a good deal of vulgar desire to be
astonished, much superstition, and which is known
as well by repeated experience, as by its analogies to other
familiar types of mental disorder, to induce a tendency
in a considerable proportion of instances to transgress
conventional morals, and ultimately to pass the limits
of sane thinking. Such movements undoubtedly bear
a very important relation to the social and political
circumstances of the people, among whom they occur,
and of the remarkable outbursts of religious excitement,
which the 19th century has witnessed in our own
country, it may perhaps be said with truth, that
they take their character not so much from the
kind of teaching, with which they have been associated,
as from the circumstance that they happen to coincide
with the early uneasy signs of awakening intellect
in a young democracy conscious of the uprising of
vast emotions to which it has hitherto been unable
to give adequate expression.

+ The allusion is to an objectionable description of manna
in a sermon by a distinguished theologian

Parting of the Ways.

There is a profound and ever-recurring tendency in human thought - to identify insanity and moral evil in regard to their cause. When theological ways of thinking prevailed, and shortcomings in conduct - were regarded as due to the agency of evil spirits, cases of insanity - were merely extreme instances of the possession of the individual soul by demons. Since supernatural explanations have been discredited, there has been a growing disposition to view all moral obligations as minor degrees of those defects of organisation, of which mental disease are the consummation types.

The French materialist - school of the last century, which first made the latter identification an authoritative one, so far as the practice of medicine is concerned, has the credit of inaugurating, in the person of Pinel, rational views on the treatment of insanity, as well as of certain kinds of crime. And hence at the present day
+ when a moralist - in a public address ascribes not only all a man's sin and error, but also the mental disease which may overtake him to abuse of the freedom of the

individual will, the physician, who knows, to whose labors
alone it - is owing, that - we are at - length able to look hopefully
for the removal of these disorders, may be pardoned for
thinking that - the license of persuasive rhetoric has been
slightly transcended. At all events, the complete and
final recognition, that - the source of mental derangement
are to be sought, not in an assumed metaphysical cause
of certain of a man's symptoms, but in the unity of his
nature, in the entire range of his moral and intellectual
constitution, acting and reacting amidst physical
surroundings, is the dogmatic recognition of a principle,
which during several centuries, had been slowly and
unconsciously transforming ethics and medicine by a new
humanizing influence. When this principle had become
formulated it was at - once apparent - that - a new
era had commenced in regard to the treatment - of the insane.
The old empiricism which aimed at - restoring symp-
toms by imprisonment - and drugs, and which, if it
debated the matter at - all, was unable to do more than
assume, that - the prevention and cure of the malady fell

within the province of the professional moralist - or of supernatural grace, was immediately superseded, when it became evident, that - the origin of these disorders is to be sought - in perfectly intelligible processes of mental development, interpreted in the light of a wide range of psychological facts and doctrines, that - extend backwards to the very beginning of the human history. To form some conception of the order of this development is therefore the first step towards rational therapeutics.

When the infant comes into the world it may be said to represent in miniature the mental qualifications of all its ancestors. There it possesses in very varying degrees, and, according to the well established order of manifestation of inherited characteristics, those powers, which were earlier acquired by its ancestors, will be principally exhibited by the "heri of all the ages" in the earlier years of life. Thus of the individual, or of nation, it is generally true that - the sensuous and emotional predominate in youth, whereas regulative intellect, if it appear at all, is of late growth; while the average

Endowment of the infant - comprises little more than a power of readily assimilating sensory inputs, which have been for ages the property of its race, and of performing movements whose nervous connections are, for the most part, perfectly organized before birth. The realization in consciousness that there is a connection between actions thus instinctively performed, and the obtaining of certain sensory gratifications, constitutes the first appearance of intelligence. When its sensations are familiar, and of a strength proportioned to its sensibility, the child is happy, when they are too vivid or strange irritation is produced. Throughout youth happiness still consists mainly in a succession of pleasurable sensations, or the expectation of such; and the denial of these takes away all value from life. As adolescence is attained, the growing brain begins to acquire control over the stimulations of the senses. Under motives of duty or prudence, the man becomes to a certain extent disinterested, and will postpone a present to a future good, recognizing that there is an end to be pursued, apart from individual

happiness, and that the importance of sensation consists in their susceptibility of being wrought into the ideas and motives, which constitute the business of the society in which he lives. Moral life, in its adult form, consists in action with social aims, and this involves a constant subordination of inherited desires to the dictates of reason, a continual renunciation of present gratifications for ideal ends. At this point we gain sight of the whole variety of mental perturbations, that afflict humanity, & unattained ideals, vaulted vanity, ambition, disappointments, as bad as those that are recorded of Don Quixote, unallayed it may be by that hero's admirable patience, tragic moral failures in which high purposes are matched with inadequate power and opportunity. the

"ἔχθιστη, ὀδύνη, πολλὰ φρονέοντα πένθος
κράτειν"

Thus described in bare outline, moral life appears as a continuous mental adaptation to varying outward conditions through the combined operation ^{of emotion} and intellect, the sensibility furnishing the immediate motive for actions,

and tell the intelligence, by taking note of their experienced effects, proximate and remote, gradually discovering their rules of conduct, which in the end become formulated as moral precepts. The instrument, by which this progress is accomplished, in its subjective aspect is called habit or association of ideas, and on its material side involves an extremely complicated organisation of nervous connections, between a multitude of special groups of ganglionic cells, upon which the various ascending modes of mentalisation depend. A survey of the process & instruments of mental evolution therefore immediately suggests the view, that is - pathological incidents, from the subjective note, ought to exhibit the character of disturbances in the due proportion of its emotional and intellectual constituents. It is indeed impossible to conceive of intelligence without feeling, and next to impossible to imagine feeling apart from intelligence; but physiology shows, that the nervous system varies in size "partly according to the quantity and partly according to the complexity of the motion which it evokes" (H. Spencer's Psychology. Vol. I. Page 152) and from

experience we know that brains are born into the world, some with a predominant capacity for manifesting emotion, and others with an equally marked preponderance of the intellectual faculties, which have a general relation respectively to the amount and to the complexity of evolved motion.

The case of Mr. J. S. Mill is perhaps the best-known ~~recent~~ ^{recent} example, in which the predominance of intellect over feeling in early life led to several attacks of "incipient if not fully developed insanity" (Gardner. Insanity, modern views as to its nature and treatment. p. 36)

The most remarkable circumstance in this connection is perhaps that the morbid state seems to have been attributable entirely to the effects of mental training, as all that we know of Mr. Mill from his career and writings as well as from the testimony of friends (See J. Morley's Miscellanies, & Mr. Mill's Autobiography) indicates that he was naturally as highly gifted on the side of the affections and charm of person as in respect of intellect. The late development of the intellectual at the expense of the emotional faculties is a natural consequence of the pursuit of various callings,

of such men as are commonly considered to be highly honorable. A man for example, who has been accustomed to regard all his circumstances and actions from a single point of view, let us say, that of money getting, is very apt to have his mental stability disturbed by the dislocation from his surroundings, which ensues when, as sometimes happens, a new and unfamiliar emotion suddenly enters into consciousness and acquires power over his conduct. These occur, in which the emotions, latent during early years, are suddenly called into play by some critical occurrence, and constitute a source of danger, which seems to be the more considerable, according as the intellectual powers have previously been highly developed. In such an individual words, phrases, rights, which had hitherto been mere counters in the game of life, become charged with new and grave meaning. The first alteration to attract attention being perhaps an unwonted quickness of disposition, or an increased talkativeness. Emotion however, in order to have its due influence in a rational life, must have a certain duration, and must be compared with

other emotions; but, in this case, the antonary quick transitions from thought- to thought- proceed according to the old association by purely intellectual resemblances; by and by becoming faintly crossed by gleams of a different- method of arrangement- among the ideas, as the stream of morbid emotionality flows on. The patient- is thus gradually conducted thro' the various stages of excitement, incoherence, mania, to end in dementia, or in a gradual ^{recovery} to a more normal, and healthy state; the new power of feeling, in the latter case, either being happily fused with the intellectual faculties, or a compromise being arrived at, in which the old and new modes of mentalization proceed side by side, on a more or less satisfactory principle of mutual accommodation.

The condition, thus faintly and inadequately sketched, is in many respects entirely analogous to the delirium of acute febrile disorders, which exhibits a like rapid flow of intense thoughts and feelings, in which order and proportion are ^{in the end} quite lost; the difference being, that- in the one case the rapidity of succession of ideas is due to a high

degree of intellectual organisation, and their vividness to the sudden outburst of long pent-up emotion, while, in the case of febrile delirium, both the rapidity and vividness of ideation are occasioned by an abnormally sensitive, because hyperæmic condition of the cerebral nerve centres.

That the modern economic system, in which individuals are mainly occupied in gaining a livelihood on the principle of universal competition, is a strong incentive to a purely analytical habit, and discourages any culture of the emotions; and that the shifting and uncertain condition of opinion in regard to many subjects of profound human interest - has a similar tendency, are facts of which large account has to be taken in considering the growth and treatment of many cases of mental disease. Hereditary excess of intellectual qualities with hereditary defect on the emotional side is, it must be admitted, a rather rare, perhaps to some extent an unique combination. It is even doubtful whether the more purely intellectual conceptions are inherited at all. On the other hand, in some manifestations which

result- from scenes or perceptions of the emotions,
and which are to a large extent predetermined in the facts
of an asexual organisation and inheritance, constitute the
majority of the cases, which come under the notice of the
general practitioner. The character of these is indicated
in sufficient detail in the preceding section, in which
it was shown to consist in an abnormal sensitiveness,
leading to an immoderate demand for comfort and
happiness, a demand, that is to say, out of keeping with
the somewhat-sordid facts of the common human destiny,
and therefore necessarily resulting in disappointment,
and finally in derangement of intellect. The lamp
to quote only one other notable example, which
uttered itself in Swift's question to his friend Delany
"do not the corruptions and villainies of men in power ex-
haust your flesh and exhaust your spirits?" is only an
extreme instance of a mental pain and irritation
which was noted in the habits of a lifetime, and which
in the end destroyed a great original genius.

The modern endeavour to explain disease by universal

X Inst: Morelli on the Statistics of Suicide is a section on the physical and moral causes shows at-large how the loss of mental balance produced by long painful illnesses has exactly the same effect in relation to suicide as an attack of long continued sorrow.

laws of evolution seems to demand, that some formal reference, however brief, be made to current theories, which ascribe the beginnings of all "mental phenomena to sensible affection of the bodily organs".

In this view the question requiring answer is -
Are the facts which have been adduced primary data in regard ^{to the} etiology of insanity or is it possible typically to refer all or some of them to a common principle of mental development - and to infer something regarding their probable origin and history? The following considerations appear so far as they go to countenance an affirmative answer to the last question.

Incidental allusion has been made in narrating the case of N. S. to the fact, that melancholia may, in predisposed individuals, result from a condition of bodily suffering. Among the proofs might be adduced that physical and mental pain have identical effects with reference to the disorders of the mind. It may be thought - however, that such an equality of pathogenic efficacy is due to the shocks to the nervous system as a whole,

+ In regard to what is advanced in the remainder of this section the writer has to acknowledge a false indebtedness to Mr. H. Spencer's *Principles of Psychology*

which undoubtedly occurs in both cases.

What then shall be said of those other instances, in which the very same phenomena of mental alienation occur in the absence of any apparent nervous shock? When the nervous system is simple below par, e.g. from sluggishness of the alimentary canal, or in exhaustion after alcoholic or other narcotic indulgence, in the complete absence of any definite cause of suffering, we may have modifications of the emotional state, ranging from mere lowering of spirits, with contraction of the sympathetic affection, up to the most pronounced insane delusions, and even mania.

Or take again the emotion of profound & vague unhappiness that is called forth by hearing expressions of physical pain. The cry of an infant in the stillness of night will awake in the ear of the listener a multitude of sympathetic tones, but it seems as though to represent the entire voice of suffering humanity, "crying sleepless women weep for her children."

+ The only view, which offers any explanation of such

fact as there is that, which regards happiness and unhappiness as emotions, generalised and organised thro' the nervous system by the coordinating action of the highest cerebral centres, or the centre of organic and other function, transmitted and added to both in respect of volume and variety during the entire ontological history.

Without affirming that in the present state of knowledge, it is possible to propound a scheme, in which the most-complex emotions are thus logically solved, in an entirely satisfactory way, from a few elementary sensations, one may provisionally hold, both from consideration of what has already been achieved in this direction, as well as on general grounds, that as a matter of history some such development of the faculties as that described by Mr. H. Spencer has actually occurred, and may regard any explanation which it affords the facts of mental disease as further evidence in support of it.

From this position it is easy to advance along

well known line of mental association to a point;
from which the relation between physical and mental
pain as pathogenic influences, is at once apparent.
Thus, pains are constituted from localised bodily sensations
or their ideal representatives, and diffused scalations of
the entire nervous system resulting from the local
stimulation. Pains tend to associate themselves in
experience with all antecedent-pain, and unpleasantness
is the result of the blending of present-with antecedent-
pains. Hence, when disease is produced this mental
or bodily suffering, we may suppose that a particular
experience has cooperated with a whole lengthened
history of hereditary pain in a predisposed individual,
towards the one result of destroying mental equilibrium.

Melancholia is in fact produced thus the agency
of a particular incident, determining the flow of nerve
energy into the old and ancestrally organised channels
of suffering.

One other question remains, which seems at-
present to be susceptible only of partial answering.

Why are states of the brain, characterized by low
vascular tension, associated with a disposition to
irritability and depression of spirits, leading to
melancholia and delirium? In other words, how does it
come to pass that the nerve plexuses and ganglia,
whose activity is associated with painful emotions,
are more easily permeable by a nervous discharge
than those, which minister to the pleasurable emotions?
Some solution of this difficulty is perhaps suggested,
if we have regard to the general course of historic develop-
ment. Those actions and emotions, which have been most
frequently repeated in experience i.e. those, which belong
to the purely animal nature of man, require only a low
degree of nerve tension for their due performance.
Such successive steps of mental advance depending
on cerebral coordination, that have been more recently
organized ^{those of} ~~than~~ ^{those of} predecessors, that have therefore
been less frequently repeated require a correspondingly more powerful
discharge of nervous energy for its accomplishment.
Now each new mental acquisition brings with it a

renew, or at least a specifically higher pleasure, than
those which went before; and to a man, who is accustomed
to the sort of happiness, that accompanies the exercise of
the higher faculties, a descent to a lower range of experience
may well be the cause, while it lasts, of some of bodily
suffering. Perhaps therefore in this general law of
human progress we have some explanation of the reason why
bodily exertion, in which the nervous system is below
par as a rule associated with an unsatisfactory emotional
condition.

There seems little doubt, however, that as a human
nature contains vestiges of more mysterious, and at the
same time more specific hereditary suffering than that,
which is ~~connected~~ incidental to well understood
processes of moral advance. Most people have
recollections of indefinite emotions of horror, that
troubled their childhood, perfectly distinct in kind
from any of their adult ~~experiences~~ experiences, and un-
connected with any particular circumstances of infancy,
and, by supposing these shadows of hereditary suffering

to be perpetuated, and become predominant in after life,
can form a tolerably ~~and~~ adequate idea of the genesis of
many prevalent types of mental disease.

It may be that the only accessible theory in regard to
these mysterious fragments of ancestral experience is
the belief, otherwise not entirely without foundation, that
in the battle and suffering which attended man's
fateful "procession from the region of impenetrable
night," his emotional nature sustained wounds, which
handicapped him heavily, when after long ages, the
stress of the conflict was ~~transferred~~ transferred inward,
to the sphere of conscience and ~~contending~~ egotistic
passions.

+ See Citations from works by Mr. J. Sully
his "Insanity. Modern Views as to its nature
and treatment" by Dr. Cairdner

If it be true that health depends largely upon a happy and harmonious ordering of men's instincts and faculties, and if the instruments, by which we operate on these, are embraced by the terms education and culture in their largest sense, — What is the kind of education, upon which as physicians, we are bound to insist?

All those ethical theories which involve a prevailing disposition to anxiety and gloom, and which figure largely in most accounts of the etiology of insanity, are obviously condemned. "The things which belong to our peace" are equally the concern of ethical, and medical practice, and there need be no hesitation in rejecting all opinions, which interfere with their constant and strenuous pursuit by everybody.

+ It has lately been shown, on high authority, how eccentricities of character, which occasionally develop genius, may also at times give rise to insanity. A more fruitful and efficacious source of mental suffering than eccentricity is the effort, by conventional ethics, and the pressure of uneducated popular

opinion, to make all men conform to one type of attainment - and character. In the humble and less educated portion of society, whose physical circumstances are hard, the strain upon mind and body, involved in maintaining an uniform standard of good conduct, constituted with little regard to the characteristics of individual human nature, involves an ethical tyranny, which at times becomes intolerable, and one of two things happens, either there is a total break down of health, or else a relief is sought from constant self-repression, and wearisome routine in the euthanasia of drunkenness. Thus science, in teaching the pursuit of rational self-culture and happiness, is not against, but in favor of morality, for the profounder ethical instinct has ever taken the form of an appeal from the formalism of tradition, and custom to nature, and in future, medicine, thus the commanding view, which she is at length able to take of human nature as a whole, will perhaps find a part of her work

in giving extension and definition to this appeal.

An acute writer has pointed out, that a chief cause of the destruction of savages, when brought into contact with civilisation, is to be sought in the decay and loss of their old tribal morality, and in the absence of that flexibility of mind, which would enable them to acquire the virtues of a superior race. A like process, less sudden, tho' equally ruin in its results, appears throughout the barbarous portion of civilized nations, when, as in Western Europe at the present time, the fabric of ancient spiritual belief is being changed at its foundations. The virtues of obedience to custom, & the will of superior, adapted to primitive time are no longer adequate as means to increase while population constantly tends to exceed supply, and the discontent, that appears at the surface, is the visible sign of a vast tho' silent ruin of health and happiness, which more and more shocks the conscience of Christendom.

It is not by restriction upon the eccentricities of talent

or character, that we can any longer hope to cure mental troubles. The freedom of conduct and of belief, which nations have wrested from governments, and priests and the exigencies of an effete militarism, they are not likely to surrender upon the invitation of physicians. Amid the deafening turmoil of contradictory opinions that now usurps the place of long venerated tradition, medicine, standing on the firm ground of widening physiological knowledge, may bear a part in the task of pointing out that ~~not~~ adjustment, as between the individual and mind, can be permanent, which, while having regard to the features in which all men agree, does not at the same time ^{pay} large attention to those equally important powers, and qualities and talents, in which they differ.

By insisting on the absurdity of educating an emotional nature without aesthetic culture, of attempting to stimulate with emotions, appropriate to the subtlest abstractions of thought, minds, to which the hardness of their physical condition has denied the

very rudiments of social feeling, of regarding it as a fault; that a man does not possess moral qualities which are "the result of experiences organized and consolidated during all past generations", or that he falls into errors, which are the necessary consequence of inherited organic disease or deformity, by performing these, and the like modest services physicians may do something towards abating the frequent - and fatal incidence of mental disease.

No need we fear that, by insisting on the consideration and culture of individual aptitudes, we shall run any risk of chilling the disinterested affections or of paralyzing social action. Must the highest ethical ideal ever continue to be a system, in which, under the pious pretext of humanitarian ends, the good and capable undergo premature exhaustion of body and mind, in order that the useless may survive and increase? Such a system even tho' it look from a man "all his goods to feed the poor" yet - if it checked the spring of charity in his heart would fail of

morally effected: They think meanly of humanity, who
imagine that men will at once become selfless when
taught the conditions, under which alone their generous
impulses may be healthfully and usefully exercised.
On the contrary, when a man finds himself in the
slave of traditional usage, heedlessly working towards
an uncertain good, when tho' the benefactions which
he has himself received from "the long brotherhood
of humanity" seem and unseem he becomes aware of
the direction, in which the ultimate good of mankind
is to be sought; then only will his virtue be energetic
and joyful because from his own experience he knows
that his actions are preparing in little a wondrous future
for his race.

It takes very many years, often several centuries
before great and important truths, perceived by a few,
can make themselves felt in the theory and practice
of the multitude. Men are fatalists, not in virtue
of their belief in the doctrine of progress, tho'
"mental organisation and long race education," but

perhaps to some extent - owing to their ignorance of it.
When they at length apprehend, in what direction their
interests lie, they are apt to apply their new knowledge
to practice with a promptness and thoroughness, of
which the mere theorist can neither conceive nor
approve. It is perhaps not unreasonable to expect
that, in the era of mental development, upon which
the forward nations of Europe are entering, as physiologi-
cal and pathological knowledge begins to exert their
due influence over the conduct of the masses,
there will soon occur a rapid and multitudinous
disappearance of many imperfect types of nervous
organization in the effort towards a better economical
and ethical order.